Message Text

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PAGE 01 KATHMA 00920 220909Z ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /064 W

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P R 220755Z FEB 78 FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1127 INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, NP

SUBJECT: B.P. KOIRALA NOT GUILTY ON FIRST CHARGE

REF: KATHMANDU 0908

1. THE SPECIAL TRIBUNAL OF JUDGE JANAK MAN SHRESTHA, WHICH IS HEARING CHARGES AGAINST B.P. KOIRALA AND GANESH MAN SINGH, ON FEBRUARY 21, DECLARED KOIRALA NOT GUILTY OF THE CHARGE AGAINST HIM, UNDER THE STATE OFFENCES ACT, OF HAVING ATTEMPTED TO THROW A HAND GRENADE AT PHUSRE POLICE BARRACK IN DHARAN IN 1974. THE TRIBUNAL IN ITS VERDICT SAID THAT THE CHARGE AGAINST KOIRALA COULD NOT BE ESTABLISHED ON THE MERE ALLEGATION OF A CO-ACCUSED. THE VERDICT IS SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE REGIONAL COURT.

2. ARGUMENT WAS ALSO STARTED FEBRUARY 21 BEFORE THE TRIBUNAL ON THE SECOND CHARGE, AND B.P.'S LAWYERS TELL US THEY EXPECT A DECISION ON THAT CHARGE TODAY, FEBRUARY 22. THEY ALSO TELL US THAT, ON SIX OF THE TREASON CHARGES, CONFESSIONS OF OTHERS ARE THE ONLY EVIDENCE AGAINST KOIRALA, AND THAT, ON THE BASIS OF YESTERDAY'S JUDGMENT, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEY BELIEVE KOIRALA SHOULD BE ACQUITTED ON THESE OTHER 5 TREASON CHARGES. THEY EXPECT HEARINGS ON THESE

SIX CHARGES TO BE COMPLETED BY FEBRUARY 24. HOWEVER, THERE WOULD THEN REMAIN ONE TREASO AND ONE SEDITION CHARGE, ON WHICH THE EVIDENCE AGAINST KOIRALA, THEY SUGGEST, MAY BE MORE SUBSTANTIAL.

3. THREE FEMALE RELATIVES OF KOIRALA WERE ALLOWED TO BE PRESENT IN THE COURT FEBRUARY 21. HECK

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